Wolf Trap

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Wolf Trap

by orphan_account

Summary

“Perhaps you simply have a good memory. Outside of neurological disorders, déjà vu in healthy people can be indicative of excellent recall of all senses, causing one to think that they are reexperiencing an event.”

Hannibal smiles outwardly at him. He looks impossibly fond in a way that Will doesn’t understand.

I can’t even remember how I got here, Will thinks, but he fortunately stops himself from saying it out loud.

“Or perhaps we’ve had this conversation before. In a different life,” Hannibal continues.

Post-fall, Hannibal finds Will. They both receive an odd chance to start over.

Notes

I tagged this San Junipero AU but it's very light on that. I'm basically borrowing the premise of a technological afterlife of sorts for a post-fall story but it won't really follow much else from Black Mirror specifically. This is my first fic in the Hannibal fandom and while I've read things from here for a while, it was pretty scary posting this given how many talented fic writers and established stories there are here. Hope everyone enjoys. ^ ^

You look like you don't belong

The lone bar on Will's side of town in Wolf Trap, Virginia is an old colonial house that owner Thomas Newport swears up and down is a historical monument deserving of equal treatment to nearby and similarly dilapidated buildings scattered throughout Fairfax County.

Thomas Newport tells this to Will with a wide grin and easy laugh as he slides a tumbler of whisky across the bar into Will's fingertips with an added dig at "all of those rich folks down in Tyson's Corner and up in Reston."

Will looks down at the glass in his hands and bites back a sarcastic response about the average income in Wolf Trap being over $200,000.

He doesn't know how he knows this but he does, or thinks he does.

It's not worth the effort and Will isn't feeling particularly social. Thomas continues to smile at him and launches into how he's actually related to Captain Christopher Newport of Jamestown fame and Will immediately tunes him out, allowing the dullness of ambient country music and chatter to wash over him.

Newport's as comfortable of a place that Will can think of to drink, outside of pouring a few fingers of whisky for himself on his porch, reaching a hand out occasionally to pet one of his dogs while he stares out into the night.

He would be even more comfortable at Newport's if he could remember exactly how he arrived.

Casting his eyes around the bar again, they land on a man at a corner table. Will quirks an eyebrow at the man's three-piece suit, complete with a paisley pocket square. On anyone else, Will thinks it would be garish, but nearly hidden in the shadows, the man overwhelms his surroundings. This man somehow makes the neon red light from a mounted Budweiser sign on the wall behind him look like it's meant to be there for dramatic effect.

Hawkish nose… high cheekbones… impeccably-styled hair… tailored suit… wealthy in an Old World way. Cares a lot about appearances… no, aesthetics. A fine line between appreciation and pretension… He'll be exceedingly polite, even to people he deems beneath him… not worthy of his time or existence…

Shaking his head roughly, Will knocks back the rest of his whisky. When he looks back, the man is still staring at him with a tranquil expression, unfazed by Will's attention.

Will pushes his glass gently across the bar towards Thomas with small smile and polite nod.

"Another one, Mister Graham?"

Will nods again. He looks up at the nearest television, mounted haphazardly at an off angle. It's showing a rebroadcast of the Orioles' game. Will already knows the outcome — a 4-1

Red Sox win with little tension — but watches it from the eighth inning onwards, occasionally glancing back at the man in the corner.

When the game ends, he thinks about offering to fix the television monitor for Thomas, more because it's not mounted correctly and this bothers him rather than an affinity for the owner.

"Pardon me."

The man's voice somehow smoother than Will had anticipated because the slight European accent that Will can't assign to an exact country of origin wraps softly around the word "Pardon" could only belong to the man in the corner.

Will looks up and meets the man's eyes for less than a second — brown, almost red or maroon, somehow familiar — before focusing on the man's left cheek.

"You've been staring at me for the past half hour or so," the man says, checking his watch conspicuously for dramatic effect.

"What's to be done about that?"

It's one of those watches that likely has to be wound by hand every day. It's not overly gaudy, but Will can see the precise mechanics of the clockwork through the face, with small gold marks in place of numbers. He wonders if he could hear the tiny mechanisms ticking if he put his ear to it. The watch is a microcosm for the man himself — purposeful, impressive, and beautiful.

I could say the same for you. You've been looking at me too.

"You… You look like you don't belong," Will stutters, immediately cursing his voice for sounding rough, like he hasn't spoken in a long time.

He doesn't know why he says it but the words trip out of his clenched jaw before he can physically hold them back.

"Sorry that was… you just look like you would be… not here."

He finishes his sentence by gesturing around Newport's lamely without a proper answer. Speaking takes so much effort and he can't understand why.

Missing time.

The phrase swims through Will's mind without comprehension. It's said in the man's voice, lightly-accented and concerned.

Come to think of it, Will can't remember the last time he did speak aloud. It almost seems like he woke up this morning completely whole but missing his memories. Everything feels familiar yet out of his reach and without context, including the man in the three-piece suit.

Will shakes his head rapidly and downs his latest tumbler of whisky in one gulp, immediately calmed by how it burns his throat as it makes its way down.

“I don’t look like the type of person who would frequent a local sports bar in Wolf Trap, Virginia?” the man asks.

He doesn’t acknowledge Will’s rudeness — a kindness, Will thinks, that Will doesn’t really deserve. A drink to the face would have been a far more appropriate response although this man looks like he would just as soon slap a white glove across Will’s cheek and declare a duel rather than waste the dark red wine swirling in the bowl of his glass.

Will hadn’t known that Newport’s offered a red wine.

“Why do you think I don’t belong, so to speak?” the man asks.

Will narrows his eyes. This guy must be messing with him.

The man cups the bowl in a circular motion, the stem lazily twirling through the air as the wine moves above it, never sloshing out of control. His wedding band — simple but expensive, likely platinum — chimes against the stem with a ping that reverberates loudly and cuts through the ambient noise.

“You’re a bit overdressed,” Will says. “You look like you should be at a ball or the ballet or giving some sort of reception for an award… no offense.”

The silver-haired man continues to stare at him almost blankly. He wears a mild expression that’s confusingly both amiable and fierce. In the dim light, the man’s eyes burn red. His crow’s feet crinkle ever-so-slightly and the right side of the man’s mouth tilts just a hair upwards.

Somehow Will knows that this is the equivalent of a beaming and approving smile from the man.

He tries to relax his jaw. Something about the entire conversation has him on edge but he doesn’t know why.

After all, he can’t remember ever meeting this man before, despite an odd and instant familiarity that makes him ache.

“What about the opera?”

“Or the opera,” Will agrees.

“I promise you that I am exactly where I want to be Mister…”

“Graham… William Graham.” Will resists the urge to plow his own fist into his eyes and scrub at his face for his own awkwardness. There is something about the man that makes Will give his full name.

“Ah… but you can just call me Will.”

“Pleased to meet you, Will. I am Doctor Hannibal Lecter,” the man says, holding out his hand politely. Will takes it firmly in his grasp, noting the softness of the doctor’s skin.

“Why are you here, doctor?”

“Please, if I’m going to call you Will, you must call me Hannibal. After all, you are not a patient of mine.”

Hannibal

The exchange feels painfully familiar.

“Why are you here, Hannibal?”

“Another round, gentlemen?” Thomas Newport says this half-mockingly, in a way that assumes familiarity, as he leans into their conversation and tilts his head in the direction of Will’s empty tumbler.

Hannibal drums his fingers against the bar. His facial expression doesn’t change, but Will notes his agitation, either at the interruption, the familiarity, or both.

“He’s like that with everyone,” Will says after Thomas hands him another whisky and leaves to go chat with another man at the other end of the bar. “Just wait until he tells you the Captain Christopher Newport story.”

“Are you apologizing for him, Will?”

“Not really… he’s obnoxious but harmless.”

“And rather rude.” Hannibal says.

Will nods. He can’t disagree, and it’s not like he knows Thomas beyond idle chit-chat that he generally tries to avoid in the first place.

“In response to your initial query, I’m supposed to be meeting a dear friend of mine.”

Here? In Wolf Trap?

Hannibal checks his watch again and sighs loudly. Resisting the urge to snort at his obvious theatrics, Will sends him a tentative smile instead, briefly looking him in the eye. He finds warmth in Hannibal’s eyes despite his blank facial expressions.

“Alas, it is almost midnight and I must be returning to my home in Baltimore.”

Looking at Will with a rueful expression, Hannibal pulls the sleeve of his suit jacket down over his watch. His cufflinks glint briefly as he turns his wrist to rest it gently on the bar.

“That’s a long drive, especially with someone waiting for you.” Will nods at Hannibal’s wedding band, not sure why he’s bringing it up at all.

“My husband passed away a few months ago.”

Hannibal says this matter-of-factly but his mouth twitches at the corners, his lips pursed.

Will somehow already knows where to look for Hannibal's microexpressions. Then again, he's always been excellent at reading people, even people as difficult as Hannibal.

"I…I'm so sorry." Will doesn't really know what else to say but this — a mediocre apology in the face of an overwhelming sadness that rolls off of Hannibal in waves.

"You have nothing to apologize for, Will."

It's the warmest that Will has heard Hannibal sound all night, yet there's an edge of melancholy that hangs off of the older man. Will resists the urge to reach forward and cover Hannibal's hand with his own.

Instead, he takes a large gulp of whisky.

"Have we met somewhere?" Will asks, relishing the burn of alcohol on his tongue.

"Why do you ask?"

"Some of this… these conversations feel familiar."

"Déjà vu?"

"Wi," Will answers irreverently. He watches as Hannibal's eyes darken until they're almost black, pupils widening.

"Why William, I had no idea you spoke French."

"I don't," Will scoffs. "A bit of Louisiana Creole."

"Louisiana is a long way from Wolf Trap."

Nodding, Will finishes his drink. He doesn't want to get into the particulars of his life in Louisiana.

Hannibal swirls the remaining wine in his glass before elegantly bringing it to his lips and draining it. Will notices a small drop of wine on the corner of his mouth and swallows. He hopes Hannibal doesn't notice his attention.

"Perhaps you simply have a good memory. Outside of neurological disorders, déjà vu in healthy people can be indicative of excellent recall of all senses, causing one to think that they are reexperiencing an event."

Hannibal smiles outwardly at him. He looks impossibly fond in a way that Will doesn't understand.

I can't even remember how I got here. Will thinks, but he fortunately stops himself from saying it out loud.

"Or perhaps we've had this conversation before. In a different life," Hannibal continues.

“Do you believe in… past lives Doctor?”

“Hannibal,” the doctor immediately corrects. Will decides to humor him.

“Do you believe in past lives, Hannibal?”

The doctor looks at his watch again and then back at Will.

“Sadly we will have to postpone this discussion as it is nearly midnight.”

Will is used to people brushing him off — another thing he remembers about himself so clearly despite his ongoing confusion — yet Hannibal truly does seem sad. Will can feel it.

“Meet me here again, Will. If you would like to.”

And just as he knew how to read Hannibal’s smallest movements, Will knows that this is a rare plea from the older man.

Will nods.

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He wakes up the next morning surrounded by his dogs and somehow lacking a hangover — not wholly unexpected since he hadn’t drank all that much but a pleasant surprise nonetheless. Will loosely runs his fingers through Winston’s neck ruff.

He doesn’t remember how he got home, but he remembers his conversation with Hannibal Lecter.

You could come back to mine, if you want

Chapter Summary

> *Breathing in sharply, Hannibal's small smile seems like an admonishment, as if Will should somehow know better when he knows nothing.*
>
> *"If I gave you an answer, Will, would that satisfy you? Would it whet your appetite to understand why I am here? If I told you every last detail, every motivation of mine, would it truly answer your question?"*
>
> *He taps his fingers for emphasis, rather than the agitation of their first meeting, against the bar. HIs fingers are long and slender. Will imagines that his hands must be soft.*
>
> *"It would help," Will spits out uncharitably. To his surprise, Hannibal laughs.*

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will wakes up every day without knowing why. Every morning it feels like something is missing — something just beyond his reach.

He fixes boat motors during the day. At night he drinks alone with his dogs or, with increasing frequency, Newport's. He doesn't know why he moved to Wolf Trap or when. He stumbles into bed at night.

When he sleeps, Will dreams of the ocean.

He's on the edge of a precipice, looking out at the roiling waves of the Atlantic. Flashes of memories flicker through his mind as he peers down the cliff — fixing boat motors with his father, puttering through the swampy waters of the bayou, sailing across the Atlantic to Europe in search of something he cannot remember. He should be afraid, but the ocean has rarely frightened him.

If he falls, he would be swept up by the waves and dashed against the rocks below.

When he looks down at his hands, they're covered in blood. It's sticky and inky black in the moonlight.

"This is all I ever wanted for you, Will. For both of us."

He hears this in an accented voice that curls around the words with a desperation he doesn't understand.

“It’s beautiful,” he whispers while waking up gasping.

He wakes up every day after having the same dream, only now, Hannibal is there too, telling Will that this is all he ever wanted for him. Hannibal, inexplicably being held tightly to Will’s chest as he drags them both over the cliff and into the sea.

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Thomas Newport shakes his head with a small smile as Will walks in the door.

“Haven’t seen him this week either,” he tells Will. “The usual?”

Will nods as Thomas pours the whisky.

Despite the bartender’s assurance to the contrary, Will looks over to the corner with the red neon Budweiser sign, only to find it expectedly empty. Thomas quirks an eyebrow up at him when he returns with Will’s drink but refrains from saying something like “I told you so” or an equally obnoxious platitude.

Will remembers Hannibal’s almost blinding flash of ire at the bartender weeks ago. The doctor’s eyes had looked almost blood red in the neon light. He had barely moved but Will had felt the distain in the slightest tap of Hannibal’s fingertips against the bar top. Hannibal had a rare presence that commanded attention, changing the air around him.

“Or perhaps we’ve had this conversation before. In a different life.”

“Déjà vu in healthy people can be indicative of excellent recall of all senses, causing one to think that they are reexperiencing an event,” Will whispers to himself.

He remembers everything Hannibal said to him that night, but still cannot remember why he is here or what he does for work.

Sometimes when Will closes his eyes, he sees a golden pendulum swing and reconstructs entire points in his life — childhood memories, early days in the police force, a searing pain in his shoulder, and a wiry middle-aged man whispering “See?”

It feels like he should have a good recall, but his memories are full of holes he doesn’t understand. A connection is missing.

Missing time

The phrase had echoed in his mind prior to meeting Hannibal and the thought is only more pervasive now. He doesn’t know what it means, but hears it in Hannibal’s lilting accent.

A loud crack of a baseball bat interrupts Will’s thoughts — another loss at Camden Yards, this time to the Minnesota Twins. The television itself still hangs lazily on its mount, threatening to fall onto an unsuspecting bar patron.

“I can fix that for you,” Will says, pointing at the crooked television monitor. “If you’d like.”

Thomas shrugs as he towels off the bar top. Someone calls for a drink from across the room and the barkeep answers with a wave and the flick of a glass from underneath the counter.

“Go ahead if you want,” Thomas says.

Will has always been good with his hands. Unlike his assumptions about the strength of his own memories, or flashes of his time in law enforcement, Will knows that he is good with his hands because — in between drinking and playing with his growing number of dogs — he fixes boat motors in his barn during the day. Righting the monitor should be easy.

Spotting the problem immediately — a loose bracket that has lost two screws — he asks Thomas for a flathead screwdriver and some screws. Thomas only has the screwdriver, so Will settles for strategically placing two screws diagonally in each bracket, taking a few from the other brackets to spread the weight more evenly.

As he settles into fixing the setup, Will forgets about his whisky and his missing memories. For a moment, there’s only the task in front of him.

Until well-manicured fingers slip underneath his left hand, holding up the television monitor a bit higher. Startling, Will turns to see the face of the man he’s been trying to find for weeks.

“You looked as if you were in need of a hand.”

His voice is cool and calm but with an undercurrent of amusement.

“Are you offering to lend me your height, Doctor Lecter?”

Will uses his title like a shield, both teasing and creating a purposeful distance.

“Please Will,” Hannibal says, reaching his other arm around Will’s head. He’s nearly embracing Will now. “There’s no need for such a formality between us.”

Hannibal’s wedding ring flashes in Will’s periphery.

Swallowing, Will quickly finishes securing the remaining brackets in place. He steps back, stumbling into Hannibal’s chest before the taller man places his hands on Will’s shoulders to steady him.

“It looks much better now. That television was an eyesore.” Hannibal quirks an eyebrow as he says this.

Although his face barely moves, Will somehow knows that Hannibal is laughing to himself — perhaps at the continued absurdity of his bespoke presence in a dingy sports bar only frequented by Wolf Trap locals.

“Thanks,” Will says gruffly, hoping that Hannibal will understand that he’s thanking the other man for his help and accepting the backward compliment.

“You must be good with your hands,” Hannibal continues. He lightly dusts his fingertips on his pants with a small frown and straightens his pocket square.

“If you don’t mind me asking you, Will, what do you do for work?”

Now seated at the bar, Hannibal gestures for Will to join him.

“I fix boat motors.”

Hannibal nods. “Ah, you have a certain mechanical prowess then.”

Will downs the rest of his drink, nodding in lieu of a response.

“Why did you come back?” he asks, taking comfort in the harsh burn against his throat.

Hannibal stares at him. Will has a sneaking suspicion that this is Hannibal’s confused expression, despite the fact that Hannibal hardly seems genuinely confused about anything.

“I told you to meet me here, Will, if you would like to,” he says as the corner of his mouth curves ever-so-slightly upwards. “And although I was a bit late in returning due to other complications in my life, here you are.”

Will looks up briefly at the Orioles rebroadcast. It’s nearly nine.

“You returned for me.” It’s not a question.

Hannibal answers regardless.

“I returned for you.”

“Why?”

Breathing in sharply, Hannibal’s small smile seems like an admonishment, as if Will should somehow know better when he knows nothing.

“If I gave you an answer, Will, would that satisfy you? Would it whet your appetite to understand why I am here? If I told you every last detail, every motivation of mine, would it truly answer your question?”

He taps his fingers for emphasis, rather than the agitation of their first meeting, against the bar. HIs fingers are long and slender. Will imagines that his hands must be soft.

“It would help,” Will spits out uncharitably. To his surprise, Hannibal laughs.

“Perhaps, but I assure you, it wouldn’t answer your question. Do you trust me, Will?”

“I don’t see why I should.”

Hannibal laughs again. It’s a pleasant and oddly familiar sound.

“That’s completely fair. After all, why would you trust a stranger?”

Will opens his mouth to say that it’s not because Hannibal is a stranger, but closes it immediately. Hannibal doesn’t feel like a stranger, and that’s what’s so unnerving about his

entire presence.

As if he can read Will's mind, Hannibal studies him with thinly-disguised interest, as if he's waiting to see what Will has planned next, when Will hasn't planned anything.

"You never answered my question," Will says slowly. "The last time you were here, I asked you if you believed in past lives. Do you?"

Hannibal looks around the bar and Will sees a flicker of sadness pass through his eyes. It's gone in less than a second.

"I believe in this life because I have to," he says, gesturing around the bar.

Thomas is standing at the other end of the bar top, pretending that he's not listening to the entirety of their conversation. A couple is laughing in another corner of the room while a lone woman browses something on her phone, nursing a drink by herself.

"Only this one?" Will presses forward, feeling that there's something important Hannibal is alluding to that's just out of his reach. If he pushes for it, maybe Hannibal can give him some answers.

Hannibal abruptly stands, towering over Will until he hoists the shorter man up from his seat and grabs the back of Will's neck.

"To answer your question, Will," he whispers. "I am here now. With you."

Hannibal lightly presses their foreheads together and Will cannot stop the sigh that escapes his throat. He rubs a slow circle against Will's hip bone with his other hand, hooking his fingers just underneath Will's belt.

"When do you have to leave for Baltimore?" Will breathes into Hannibal's mouth.

"Midnight," Hannibal says. His voice is husky and more emotional than Will expected, although upon further thought, he doesn't know exactly what he expected at all.

"You could come back to mine," Will says. "If you want. If you don't want to make the drive back to Baltimore. You could stay at my place."

"I'd like that, Will."

Chapter End Notes

This story is not abandoned, I promise! It's just very difficult for me to write for some reason.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!